



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## **Library Trustees Minutes 12-09-2003**

Robbins Library Board of Trustees  
December 9, 2003

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 PM. Attending were trustees David Castiglioni, Katharine Fennelly, Barbara Muldoon, Frank Murphy, Joyce Radochia and Susan Ruderman. Ms. Deal was absent. Also attending were director Maryellen Loud, assistant director Cynthia Diminture, Fox Branch Librarian Page Lindsay and Pam DiBona and Nancy Gabriel of the Friends of the Fox Library.

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved as written on a motion by Ms. Fennelly; seconded by Ms. Ruderman.

### Friends of Fox

The trustee chair, Mr. Murphy, welcomed the representatives of the Friends of Fox and thanked them for their efforts. Pam DiBona expressed appreciation to the Board for the invitation to attend the meeting. Nancy Gabriel gave a status report on the work of the group. They are pleased with the news that enough money has been raised thus far to keep the Fox Branch open on a third day per week for the remainder of the fiscal year. They hope to conduct an additional fundraiser this year, perhaps a family movie night at the Capitol or the Regent Theater. Mr. Murphy encouraged the group to contact the Friends of the Robbins Library to coordinate scheduling of events. In response to a question by Ms. Fennelly, Ms. Gabriel said that the group is applying for 501c(3) status to become a legally recognized non-profit organization.

### Director's Report

Problems continue with the HVAC system. There have been backlogs in the Technical Services Department due to staff cutbacks, the receipt of grant-funded materials and the implementation of the DVD rental collection. Circulation is down slightly from last year, possibly due to the reduction in open hours. Interlibrary loan business has increased, so staff has been kept busy handling this workload. Attendance at children's programs seems to be keeping pace with last year.

### Meeting Room Policy

Ms. Loud distributed a revision of the Meeting Room Policy based on discussion from the previous meeting. She read a letter which she received from Oakes Plimpton regarding his proposals to conduct a poetry group and an adult chess club. He sought amendments to the meeting room policy to allow the collection of donations at meetings, to allow meetings to run after library hours have ended and to unlock the exterior door from the Community Room to the parking lot. After discussion, the consensus of the Board was as follows: Money collection – No change to the current policy which prohibits this; After hours meetings – No, since this had recently been changed to reflect the difficulty in procuring custodial coverage after library hours; Exit door unlocked – No change,

because this is a security issue. Ms. Fennelly made a motion to accept the revised meeting room policy; seconded by Ms. Radochia. Passed unanimously.

#### LSTA Grant Application

Ms. Loud has filed a letter of intent with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners to apply for a mini-grant to conduct a Community Read. Funding could be used for books, book-related links on the town's web site, public relations materials, a part-time coordinator and perhaps an author visit.

#### Circulating Prints Database

Additional research needs to be done on this topic, so it will be revisited at the January meeting.

#### Author Program

Some suggestions for the spring program were Stewart O'Nan (Ms. Ruderman), Perri Klass (Ms. Muldoon) and a re-visit by Dennis Lehane (Ms. Fennelly). Discussions will continue next month when the author subcommittee chairperson, Ms. Deal, will be in attendance.

#### Anniversary Celebration

Ms. Loud met with Ms. Radochia and Ms. Fennelly to propose activities and a timeline for the celebration of the anniversary year. The trustees discussed the proposals. The committee will meet again soon to refine the schedule.

#### Update on Non-smoking Concerns

In response to a concern expressed by one of the trustees at a previous meeting, Ms. Loud consulted the Town Counsel and the Board of Health about the legality of prohibiting smoking outside of the library building. Both agreed that it could not legally be prohibited. However, Christine Connolly of the Board of Health suggested posting a sign asking people to refrain from smoking on the library steps and ramp. Ms. Loud will explore the best area for placement of the sign, as the trustees did not want this to be posted on the front door.

#### Audiovisual Shelving

Ms. Loud apprised the group that the LP record collection has been weeded and some items sent to the basement storage. Expansion shelving will be added to the third floor once some bases are purchased. This will provide expanded shelf space for the videocassette and DVD collection. Ms. Loud made a funding request for additional shelving in the Young Adult area on the first floor. Ms. Fennelly made a motion; seconded by Ms. Ruderman to expend \$2,379 from the Furniture/Fundraising Account, for the purchase and installation of AV and YA shelving. Passed Unanimously.

#### Proposed Sub-Committee

Ms. Ruderman discussed the difficulty in measuring the value of a library, especially in bad budgetary times. With that in mind, she proposed the formation of an ad hoc committee that could use statistics to measure various aspects of library service. She suggested that the group include two-three trustees as well as some community members. The Board supported this idea.

#### Update-FY05 Budget Requests

Ms. Loud distributed several related budget spreadsheets. There are proposed increases in utilities, building maintenance, contracted services and personnel (for step raises). There is little change in the library materials category from last year's figures. Ms. Loud will meet again with the Town Manager next week and the budget will be submitted to the Selectmen by the end of the month. The trustees discussed in a general way what the library service priorities are, in consideration of possible budget cuts. There was a general consensus that hours open should be preserved as much as possible. Trustees would also like to maintain current staffing levels, if possible. The general order of priority is :

1. Hours open 2. Quality of service 3. Materials.

#### Recognition of Staff Anniversaries

Ms. Deal had suggested honoring long-time employees with gifts on designated anniversaries. Ms. Loud is following up on gift suggestions and money amounts. A fuller discussion was deferred until the next meeting due to the absence of Ms. Deal.

#### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM on a motion by Ms. Fennelly; seconded by Ms. Radochia. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Diminture